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TOPICS OF TO-DAY.

Prepared by Dumb-Crumb Junior.



A Poll-it-tickle Speech.



The New Electorate!



The Ran-goon powder Plot.



Man, delay!

"The time allowed for the Burmese answer to the English Ultimatum will expire on the Fifth of November."—Globe, Oct. 27.)



THE DISAPPOINTED SUITOR.

(Not improbable.)

Prince Alex. Kicked out, by the Powers! Then I must console myself with Sophia!  
King Milan. Boo-hoo! No Widdin, after all!

THE SILLY COMMANDER.

(A Story of the Next War according to the precedent.)

COLONEL RABBITHUTCH had been sent out by the Government of the day, with the cordial consent of the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, to suppress an expected rising of the Muffs, a number of Dutch emigrants who had settled in British South Africa. On his way to his command the gallant officer, having learned by heart all the newspapers he had brought with him, and re-read several times the Mess Library, found himself with absolutely nothing to do. So, being a teetotaller, and therefore unable to conscientiously indulge in the customary distraction of an idle soldier, he took to thinking. And he thought about every subject under the sun, and at last by the process of exhaustion came to the consideration of his own profession.

"Tarnish my scabbard!" he exclaimed one day—he was far too good a man to swear, but of course as a warrior was obliged occasionally to use a little strong language—"tarnish my scabbard! I have got a new idea! I will conduct this campaign on a novel plan!"

Soon after this the Colonel arrived at the "seat of war" (he stealthily smiled when he heard the place thus described), and was met by his subordinates. He immediately filled up the appointments on his Staff, but in such a way that murmurs were heard on all sides. Disregarding the claims of seniority, he, in defiance of all precedent, posted the right men to the right places. When remonstrances reached his ears, he turned upon his heel, smiled, and repeated to himself, "My new idea—conducting this campaign on a novel plan! Tarnish my scabbard! but I will surprise them more before I have done with it!"

And he was as good (or as bad) as his word. There was never so strange a leader! Over and over again he set at naught the traditions of the Service. He marched along with his whole force without firing a shot, thus causing the ammunition to be practically a worthless incumbrance. All the Quarter-Masters were disgusted, and the Surgeons began to forget their prescriptions in their unwelcome and enforced idleness.

"Please, Colonel," said the Chief of the Staff, one morning, carrying a map into the hut of his superior, "may we make a detour to the right of about five miles on our line of march?"

"What for?" asked RABBITHUTCH, lighting a manilla cheroot.

"To attack the fort which is held, I believe, by the Muffs in some force, Sir." And the Major showed the Colonel where he thought the latter ought to go.

"Don't see there's much good in it," returned RABBITHUTCH. "We can get to the enemy's Capital just as easily, whether we take the fort or not."

"True," responded the Major, sadly, "but by not taking the fort we shall miss a brush with the Muffs, and our men find their ammunition embarrassingly heavy."

"Can't help that—they must carry it,—we mustn't waste public property."

And this little incident was a sample of many others. Over and over again the Colonel refused to burn powder. It was true enough that there was no absolute need for fighting, yet as soldiers are fond of their profession, this absence of human slaughter was not exactly popular. Indeed, the expedition did not regret its return to its original headquarters. As for RABBITHUTCH, he hurried back to England, and soon presented himself before the Duke to report.

"Well, Colonel," said H.R.H., when they were together in the Horse Guards portion of the War Office, "and how have things gone?"

"Capital, your Royal Highness—the men behaved admirably."

"Did they?" exclaimed the Duke, heartily, although as a matter-of-fact he did not much relish hearing the rank and file spoken of before allusion had been made to the officers. "Did they, indeed! Well, if you have got some old Sergeant-major quite past work, he might be promoted to the rank of Junior Subaltern."

"Thank you, your Royal Highness, but if I could find such a man (and I can't, for all my non-coms. are most efficient) I really think he would prefer to remain respected in the Sergeants' Mess rather than appear as a fish-out-of-water in the ante-room of the officers."

The Duke stared in astonishment, and bowed.

"As for my colleagues, TOMMY SABRETACHE and—"

"TOMMY SABRETACHE!" exclaimed H.R.H., in tones of pained reproach. "My dear Colonel, calling an officer by his Christian name! I really cannot permit it—you know how I dislike familiarity!"

"I beg your pardon, Sir, but the fact is my colleagues were such good friends, that I looked upon every one of them as a relative. Tarnish my scabbard! they were capital fellows!"

"Tarnish your scabbard!" repeated the Royal Duke, indignantly, "Colonel RABBITHUTCH, I must request you to put a guard over your tongue—you know how strongly—how very strongly, I object to the use of violent expressions of that kind."

The visitor again apologised, and then informed the illustrious Field-Marshal that the object of the expedition had been accomplished. —The Muffs had completely submitted.

"Glad to hear it," returned H.R.H., shortly, "and now for the list of killed and wounded."

For the first time the Colonel hesitated.

"The fact is, your Royal Highness, I have conducted the campaign on a new plan."

"Hate anything new," returned the illustrious Duke. "However, it may be all right. And now for the list of killed and wounded."

Again the Colonel hesitated. "The fact is, your Royal Highness, the Muffs when they saw I was in earnest, submitted. As I have told you, I have carried out all your instructions, and been most successful. On the other hand, I have no list of killed and wounded."

"No list of killed and wounded!" exclaimed His Royal Highness, aghast.

"No; because there was no fighting."

"No fighting!" And the illustrious Duke nearly fainted.

The poor Colonel, seeing his Chief so deeply moved, tried to explain that really and truly blood-hed had been entirely unnecessary.

"No fighting! Oh, dear me!" The Field-Marshal blushed at finding himself using so strong and so unusual an expression. "I never heard of such a thing! A campaign, and no fighting!"

After a very painful pause, the agitated Field-Marshal managed to control his emotion.

"Colonel RABBITHUTCH," at length he commenced, "I suppose, as you have attained the object of your appointment, we must express satisfaction with your exertions. But, Sir," he added with severity, "as you were good enough to adopt a new plan of your own invention, and carry out your instructions without any bloodshed—(Good gracious! dear me! oh, fie! without any bloodshed! Oh dear!)—of course you won't get any promotion!"



## SOCIAL AGONIES.

"BY THE WAY, ARE YOU DINING WITH THE MONTMORENCY BROWNS TO-NIGHT?"  
 "OH, HEAVENS! NOW I REMEMBER, THEY DID ASK ME TO DINE THERE TO-NIGHT!"  
 "WHAT—AND YOU FORGOT TO ANSWER?"  
 "OH, I ANSWERED FAST ENOUGH; BUT I'VE CLEAN FORGOTTEN WHETHER I ACCEPTED OR DECLINED!"

## THE VERY NEW RULES OF BILLIARDS.

By A. LEG, Esq.

THE Billiard Association of Great Britain and Ireland has just issued some new Rules of Billiards, but as they are ridiculously incomplete, we hasten to supplement them with some of our own, as hints to players:—

1. If playing without a Marker, always keep your opponent's score, and let him keep yours. He will probably score you correctly, and you can do as you please with his score.
2. Always stand opposite a pocket your antagonist is aiming at, and move about while he plays; a judicious sneeze just as he strikes has a good effect.
3. Use chalk to your own cue, but keep a little soap or pomatum in your pocket for the tip of your adversary's should he put it down during the game. This will be found especially useful at Pool.
4. Should your adversary turn away from the table while you are playing, and a ball goes near, but not into a pocket, it is good play to convert it into a hazard with your hand; at the same time calling out the score at the top of your voice. This useful stroke must be done firmly and quickly.
5. Never own to a fluke yourself, but never let your opponent make a good shot without muttering "Fluke!" or "What luck!"
6. Put the white whenever possible, especially if it irritates your antagonist. He should learn to keep his temper.
7. Get the Marker out of the room, and then put your score on even when you have made nothing. This must be done very quietly. If it is discovered, blame the Marker. He is there for the purpose.
8. When playing Pool, always pick up any money put down for "lives," whether it is yours or not. You can return it, if found out; but the people who put it down will often pay again to avoid a wrangle, and if they don't, the proper owners ought to look better after their money.

## THE PEASANT PROPRIETOR.

*Or, The Future of Hodge, from his own Diary.*

## A COUPLE OF EXTRACTS.

**SPRING** (edited by Mr. Chamberlain).—Well, this be summat loike. This cuttin up of t'ould Squire's property has given oi a good fairish six acre plot all to myself, to try a bit o' farmin on my own account. Oi can reckon on startin wi' three cows, and stock, and so forth, got for oi out o' the rates, and what be wanting to oi after that,—well, that 'll oocome out o' t'ould Squire's furniture. Who says luek h'ant oocome to HODGE, who has his roights now along with the foinest in the land any day. No more workin for wages for oi. Noa! Oi be goin to grow my own crops, rear my own cattle, and clean my own land, and get along wi'out farmer LEATHERGAITERS a hectorin and a lordin ont over oi. Eighteen shillin a week! Bless my eyes, to think that oi should ever ha' stooped to that! And now oim a holdin property myself, and have got the vote, and know how to give it straight for improvement and progress, and the advance of the Agricultural interest. It's a foine time I'm havin of it, and no mistake.

**WINTER** (supervised by the Marquis of Salisbury). Ah! who would ha' thought it had ha'all turned out so bad loike! It all oocome of listenin to that chap CHAMBERLAIN as told oi a pack o' lies about oi and tother chaps loike oi who didn't know when we was well off. What good come to oi out o' the bit o' t'ould Squire's land? None, that oi can tell 'ee. First, the soil was poor stuff, and oi had naught to put into it, and now here's fresh farm stock wanted, and oi haven't a blessed halfpenny not even for bread, so oi be fairly beat and things be oocome to a dead standstill. And there be no help to oocome from t'ould Squire because he be clean gone when they took his land and cut it up and give oi and tother chaps a bit each all round. Ah! Well, things can't go on in this fashion loike, so oi be goin up to farmer LEATHERGAITERS to see if oi can get a bit of a job o' work. What wi' the Missus and five young mouths to feed, bless me, if I don't reckon eighteen shillin a week would be just a godsend. Anyhow it would mean food and clothin and such loike, which is more than oocome of all that foine tall talk about improvement and progress and advance of Agricultural interest, which ended in an empty stomach and a money-box wi' the bottom knocked out.

"MURDER IN IRISH."—Boycotting.

9. When playing Pyramids, frequently accuse your adversary of making foul strokes. He will be obliged to give in sometimes; and even when you are so palpably wrong that he won't stand it, the charge will very likely put him off his play.

10. Rule No. 4 is very useful also at Pyramids, but must be modified for that game. In Pyramids, put any ball that you can manage into a pocket unobserved, and a few minutes afterwards call attention to the score, which of course will be wrong. Then affirm that you had forgotten to score that ball to yourself, which will be quite true, and immediately do it.

11. Procure a few bad half-crowns, florins, &c., for Pool, and pay your pool to the Marker, i.e., do not put it in the box, or it may be noticed. Then, when the pool is distributed, and the bad money appears at the end, blame the Marker, as in Rule 7.

12. If you lose a "life" early in a pool, it is comparatively easy to get it back again by a persistent statement that the game has been wrongly scored, and the others will often give in for the sake of peace and quietness. As in Rules 7 and 11, lay the blame on the Marker.

By adhering to these Rules you are sure to make money at the game, but they will possibly not add to your popularity in the Billiard-room. People are so jealous of exceptional skill.

## Hair and Rabbit.

In a paper lately read to the Academy of Sciences at Paris by M. PASTEUR, that illustrious *savant* announced that he has at length discovered a real cure for hydrophobia. This remedy consists of a medium of inoculation extracted from the marrow of rabbits which have been made hydrophobic. Now then, the antidote to hydrophobia, instead of being, as formerly imagined, "a Hair of the dog that bit you," is a Rabbit which dog-poison has made more rabid than ever. In future we shall be cautious about Welsh-rabbits.



INTERIORS AND EXTERIORS. No. 24.



THE CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT.

"COMFORT? Comfort scorned of"—Judges! This is truth the Poet sings,  
That at the Old Bailey comfort's the most mythical of things.  
There Discomfort holds high revel, makes the Jurymen his sport;  
Hope abandon, ye who enter—well, the Central Criminal Court.  
Hope of ease for mind or body. Purgatory here behold,  
See its hapless victims tortured 'twixt extremes of heat and cold;  
Driven from freezing-point to fainting, packed like sardines, pushed and prodded,  
Hustled by imposing Ushers, and by Bobbies able-bodied.  
Travelling by a Cheap Excursion, waiting in the mob at Drury,  
Is not half so bad as being called on an Old Bailey Jury.  
See the Judges. To the left, above the gas that all aslope is,  
Peer the fine judicial features owned by Mr. Justice LOPES;  
HAWKINS next, and FAY; then Sheriffs sitting to the right; between them  
Eagle beak and lion brush—who can forget them who has seen them?  
Show of stout Sir ROBERT CARDEN. ST. JOHN WONTNER down below,  
Just above that poor old boy, whose hat they've bashed in at a blow,  
Fiercely flames, from piles of "Papers"; WILLIAMS (MONTAGU) is next him,  
Glaring hard at placid POLAND much as though something had vexed him;  
That phenomenal proboscis he appears inclined to snap at;  
Rather pity the poor witness MONTY next may have a rap at.  
Next above beams busy BRASLEY, blending dignity with bustle;  
Then the calmly classic features of the great Q.C., CHARLES RUSSELL.

Left of him comes KISCH the keen-faced, WADDY, Q.C., glares above him,  
And, below, young FORREST FULTON,—don't the criminals just love him?  
That sharp eye-glass underneath? Oh, that most commonly on view is.  
Ask men who's the dapper wearer, and they'll answer "That's GEORGE LEWIS!"  
Close behind him EDWARD CLARKE, the small, but smart Conservative Q.C.  
He won Southwark, shone, got shelved—*pro tem.* of course. *His case in nuce!*  
To the left, the Under-Sheriffs hold an animated chatter.  
The wig-hidden Barrister below is "baked," that's what's the matter.  
No one offers him the "salts" though; maybe he is less attractive  
Than the Lady in whose aid the burly myrmidon is active,  
In the opposite corner. One may shirk this Court, though not a craven.  
Just above that flopping wig, with face ascetic and clean shaven,  
Stands the 'cute City Inspector, and, less lantern-jawed and wizen,  
Bearded like a polished pard, behold the Chaplain to the Prison!  
There, my curious British Public! Mr. Punch has cantered gaily  
On his doggerel Pegasus, among the Toffs at the Old Bailey.  
Rhymers' theme—much like that cramped Court's atmosphere—might well be sweeter,  
Even HOMER found 'twas hard to put a Catalogue in metre.



## A FACT.

Salvation Army Black Man (to Farmer in opposite corner of Third-class Carriage). "HAVE YOU BEEN BORN AGAIN, MY FRIEND?" Farmer. "DON'T KNOW. HAVE YOU?" Black Man. "YES, I HAVE." Farmer. "WELL, THEN, IF I'D BIN YOU, I'D 'A BIN BORN A WHITE 'UN!"

[Collapses of Black Man.]

## BOMBASTES.

WHERE'ER we turn, in every place,  
We "meet Bombastes face to face."  
He hangs his boots on every "stump."  
Platforms resound with his loud thump.  
Now—climax of his noisy capers—  
He's taken to the penny papers.  
As bumptious scribe he flouts and trounces,  
And so thrasonically bounces,  
That patient sense can barely brook  
The journalistic *Pumblechook*.  
O Evening Oracles, your shindy  
Is very wild and very windy:  
And yet, for all your blatant blast,  
It is but peas you shoot at last.  
The row may shock one's tympanum,  
But for the rest, 'tis all a hum—  
Bombastes thundering forth as "We,"  
Is but the bladder and the pes;  
And, like an India-rubber ball,  
Though full of bounce, his force is small.  
Who'll bid him cease to gas and blow so?  
Who'll sack Bombastes Furioso?  
He in the farce may mirth assist,  
But sickens as a journalist!

AN EGGSAMPLE.—Talking of the Upper House, Lord ROSEBURY recommended "reformation," not "abolition," and asked whether it was not the rule in most countries to have two governing Chambers (on the principle, we suppose, that two heads are better than one—but if so, why not two Kings, &c., &c., which opens up a large subject)—and he observed that wise people "do not put all their eggs in one basket." This was not quite apposite perhaps, but accepting the parable of two baskets of eggs, we may consider that we put our best eggs into the House of Commons basket, and the added ones into the other.

## THE CROCUS LEAGUE.

I'VE just received a application of so egstornary a charakter that at fust I couldn't make hed nor tale of it. I am aoshally arkst to jine the Committee of a new League, to be called "the Crocus League!" Of coarse I thort as how it meant the Brummagem Crocus as Mr. CHAMBERLAIN is so werry fond of cultiwating and of transplating wherever he thinks as the aile and haspet suits, but that I finds is a mere pollytickle hemblem, the how true lovers of Nature can use butifl flowers for sitch low pupperes as that I can't understand. But my Crocus League is quite another pair of shoes, as the Cobbler said. It is to consist of one representatif of ewery rank and ewery perfession, and ewery trade in the hole Metrolypus, and its one grate object is to preserve to all time the immortel memmory of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE! I natrally asks my Wisitor why I am slected for this grate honner, and the astonishing reply is, because of my name and fame! It seems that the fust rule of "The Crocus League" is, that each member must bear the onered name of ROBERT, so I natrally represents the important perfession of Waiters. Inside the envelope as contains the invitation is enclosed a fust list of Members as is expected to jine at wunce, as any unnecessary delay ensues xpulshun, a disgrace as wood make the werry boldest turn pail.

I gives the names of a few proposed representatives, as far as I remembers 'em, as a fair sample of the bulk, as they says in the commersal World. Principle representative of the Government, ROBERT MARKIS of SALSBURY, who will most probably be elected President of Abbytation number wun. Representative of the House of Lords, ROBERT MATCHBOX, WIGGINT SHEERBROOK; of the Court of Haldermen, Sir ROBERT CARDEN. Night; of the Corporation, Sir ROBERT FOWLER. Barrowwrite; of the Poets, ROBERT DOWNING; of the Post Office, ROBERT the Hunter; of the Bakers, Majer-Gen. Sir ROBERT BAKER; of the Surveyors, ROBERT the Driver; of the Metropolitan Bored of Works, ROBERT FREEMAN, as did most on 'em; of the Stock Exchange, ROBERT PIXLEY, the Bullionaire, and so on, *Had him-fenitum*, as the French says, through such a list of hement men as bears my onered name, as amost made me blush as I red it. To show how sternly pertickler they is as to the name, I learns that the slected representative of the great Livery Company was rejected on account of his name being ROBERTS, which so wexed his haspiring sperit that he is said to have amost cried-his eyes out on account of his extra hess, which he at wunce offred to sacrifice but his prayer was rejected,

as a hinsult to his Godfathers and Godmothers who guv it him. Upon venturing with becumming unility to ask what was the principle hobject of the "Crocus League" in wishing to preserve to all time the memory of a gent of whom I had never heerd afore, I was informed that he was formerly a great Statesman, who had a wonder-fool nollidge of "Human Nature," greater even than Mr. OKASTUS HARRIS himself, and that he biled down all his long egsperiance into the noble maxim, that "Every Man has his Price!" Upon again asking what might have been the Price of the defunct gentleman aforesaid, I was told as it was a Earldom, a goodish lot of money and a Garter. Wen I asked why only one, I was told as the werry 'ighest swells of the hole Country never wore but one, and that was given to 'em by the QUEEN's own hand, and was all covered with dimans, and worn so as ewerybody could see it. I looked pretty closely at my informant to see if he was in earnest, but he never even winked much less amyld. So as he bore my gaze I bleaved him.

He then said that in acordancee with the rules of the Crocus League, I should have to state what would be about my price, before I was elected, when I at wunce replied that I thort as I should be satisfied with about five pound a week, a Wictoria Cross, and the permanent Wine Wardenship of the Washupfool Company of Wintners. He was kind enuff to commend my moderashun, as he called it, and to make a note of it, which made me rayther regret as I hadn't put a better price on myself, but Such is Life! If we gets wot we arks we allers wishes as we had araked for more, like the boys who sella oranges of the Ebrow purawayshun. He further explained to me that as the grate Statesman aforesaid was remarkable fond of Crocusses, the League had adopted it as their cymbal, and as they flourished in early Spring, the Committee had slected the fust of April as their erppropriate Festival Day, on which occasion I should meet such an ass-embloge of the leading sperrits of London as wood etonish me.

My brother Crocus Leaguer, before going, said as how he had forgotten to mention that the entrance fee to the fust 500 members was limmited to a paltry guinny, but wood be enormously increased to them as follerd, so if I wood cash up that insignificant amount, he wood send me a fishal recelet in dew course. This I accordingly did, tho' it didn't leave many behind, and I shall I expeex shortly be a full blown Committee Man of "The Crocus League" with all the rites and priveleges thereunto belonging, including free attendance at Noblemen's Park Fates and Pick Nicks, and the right to wear a full blown Crocus on my manly buzzom on our Festive Day! ROBERT.



FAWKES—ET PRÆTEREA NIHIL.

*A Monologue on the Fifth.*

WONDER who the dickens I am, and what I'm being taken about like this for? A Guy, am I? Well, and what's that? Seem



A Nearly Exploded Idea.

popular too—odd that I shouldn't know why—but I don't . . . To be sure, I remember now! I'm a Patriot—foiled in a plot, or something of that sort, that's why they're all shouting!

"See no reason why Gunpowder Treason should ever be forgot," do they? They're quite right—no more do I . . . Hooray! Keep it up! gratifying, very.

Attendants, or retainers, or whoever they are, seem rather a shabby lot, undersized, too, and—well, plain. But there—they can't help that. If I had any nasty pride in me I shouldn't go about with them like this. Still they are faithful, and have known me in adversity, probably.

What's this great ugly beast of a thing coming along? Dear, dear, disgraceful—why do they allow it? He's got a crowd of his own, too—looks to me like a deliberate insult, that's what it looks like!

Our crowds are parleying; I and the Insult left alongside. Good mind to ask him what he means by his tomfoolery. I will too. Says it isn't his fault, he's in the same line himself, there are dozens of us about; he tells me he just met one driving a donkey. He's in a barrow, and I'm in a kitchen-chair! I do think they might have given me the donkey—you get more dignity with a donkey.

Don't think this pitiable object had any intention of annoying me, so I'll just give him a friendly hint: another time he might turn out decently dressed—more respectful to the public and—ah—to Us.

He nearly falls out of his barrow! Can this dilapidated ass be laughing? When his attendants have slapped him on the back, and he's got his breath again, he tells me to "look at home." I look at a plate-glass window opposite.

Hm—well. Might have come out in a better hat, perhaps, and yes, my tailor *does* want looking after a little. Rather more round-shouldered than I fancied, and that is an awkward trick I've got of turning my feet in.

But that's all—and, confound it, there's nothing ridiculous about me! Now, you couldn't say that of the other fellow—he's grotesque, that's what he is, poor devil! He can't help it, but he is.

If he's going on grinning and giggling like that, I've done with him. He says I'm "the funniest he's seen yet." And to think that this idiot is a Guy!

Off again. Lovely creature in shop-window standing between bottles! Ha! she turns slowly and looks at me! . . . She doesn't see anything funny in my appearance . . . Quite an odd thrill her eyes give me. Really, I've a good mind to stop and follow this up! But no—better not—can't be too careful in a position like mine. Ah well! I threw her a smile—she won't forget me!

How fickle and ungrateful are the populace! Just heard an old gentleman call me a "public nuisance." And this to me! A man who—it is annoying not to remember what the dooce it was I did do.

Wish I was at home—wherever that is—they do joggle this chair so!

This is home, I suppose. Well, they've put me up in a nice high place where I can see the scenery. Darkness already—let the sports commence. If there's much more of this banging and fizzing I shall have to go away—I've had a trying day, and I can't stand it.

I can tell them this; if they're not more careful, they'll be setting fire to something presently!

I told them so—just under my chair,—now they'll be sorry! I wouldn't come down now if they asked me—it's splendid! I've got a big fire all to myself. Wish that girl in the window could see

me now! Think I look rather well in flames . . . Face getting quite burnt—so becoming, when you don't freckle.

I've dropped one of my boots—awkward thing to do in public. Might I ask you to return that boot? Nobody seems to notice, and, after all—who cares?

What's this—crowd retiring respectfully? Heard someone say I was "as full of squibs and crackers as I could hold." Is that what makes this fizzing underneath my waistcoat?

I do feel so peculiar . . . Something's going to happen, I know! Well . . . There now . . . Think of that! Didn't know I had it in me! Just one more burst, and I've done! Ha! it's coming, it's—Bang!!



A Quite Exploded Idea.

[Breaks up in much confusion.]

CONCERNING CRITICS.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,

I WOULD go even further than your admirable correspondent, Mr. FLEXIBLE NIBBS, I would abolish the Dramatic Critic altogether. The Manager of the Theatre should write a *résumé* of his new piece, as long or as short as he pleased, and this should be inserted in the daily papers as an advertisement. The public would then read this, go to the theatre, and judge for themselves. I should be inclined to do the same kind of thing with regard to books and picture-shows. The British Public does not require a critic to tell it where to purchase its game, its wine, or its clothing, and I take it, the B.P. is quite as good a judge of a play, a picture, or a book, as it is of a pheasant, a glass of claret, or a coat.

Yours partially,  
THE CRITIC ON THE HEARTH.

"LIFE IN LONDON HYGIENICALLY CONSIDERED."

MR. CANTLIE, who delivered a lecture bearing the above title, the other night at Exeter Hall, must tell the truth—don't you see, "Can't lie," ha! ha!—or we should be inclined to consider, notwithstanding it may have been "a hundred years since the Strand had a breath of fresh air," in spite of our breathing "sixty tons of carbon" daily, finding *bacteria* in our wood pavements, and being liable to curvature of the spine on account of the sloping footways—that London is the healthiest city in the world. We have not yet observed a violent exodus of the inhabitants on account of these startling disclosures, nor have we heard of any striking diminution in house-rents.

Joke by Jeremy Diddler.

EVERY tool it's own task," is a maxim that's found  
In (sharp) practice a mere imposition;  
For the best way to *chisel*—your creditors round—  
Is often to *file*—a petition.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD made a seamanlike, if not a statesmanlike speech on Thursday last at St. Andrew's Hall, and, after he had finished with a Tennysonian quotation, he was "sharply questioned." No doubt he also "sharply answered;" but this was not recorded in the *Daily Telegraph*. If the questions were puzzling, and Lord CHARLES got thoroughly "riddled,"—well, he had only to send for "the Man who Mended the Boiler," who would have assisted him to steam away triumphantly.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.—Sir, here's a case for interference. Almost every day may be seen a paragraph in the papers, headed "Horses struck out of their engagements." Now, "in" or "out of engagements" can be no excuse for striking horses, unless they are vicious, which is not alleged. Where's the S.P.C.A.?

Yours indignantly, N. ODDY.

AUTUMNAL MANŒUVRES.—The Election addresses and harangues of political opponents, trying to circumvent one another.



## A MODEL REPORTEE.

*Distinguished (but irritable) Amateur.* "CONFOUND IT, PHIPPS! WHY, YOUR FACE IS ALL OUT OF DRAWING!"  
*Model (irritable also).* "IT MUST INDEED BE OUT OF DRAWING, SIR, IF YOU CAN PERCEIVE IT, SIR!"

## REAPPEARANCE OF THE POPULAR FAVOURITE.

*Star Performer loquutus:—*

Yes, I rather think it's time that I should tread the boards once more.

And secure the old full houses, and arouse the old, old roar. I have had a longish "easy," and performers of less note, With exaggerated action and much straining of the throat, Have been bidding for top honours very palpably of late, And the Public's getting dubious and shakes a puzzled pate. It's becoming very obvious that the Stage requires a clearance, So the Favourite no longer must delay his Reappearance!

Let me see! *Tra-lal-la-lal-la!* Yes, I think my voice will do. Then my repertoire's extensive, though it's not entirely new; But I think I know my Public, and can gauge the general taste, And too spick-and-span a Programme is an error and a waste. Partner JOW may find that later! Still some Novelties I've got, And I doubt if rival Pros will soon produce a smarter lot. There's a Bill! The four chief items in themselves make up a Show, And if anyone can beat it, he's a man I'd like to know; But of course they don't exhaust me—I'm too old a hand for that. My Variety Entertainment I'll take care shall not fall flat, It is bound to bring the house down, and a big one, or I'm done, For this is my Last Appearance, and the Show must have a run.

Yes, I've trod the boards—good gracious, I scarce like to think how long!—

And a vigorous half-century of pose and patter-song, In innumerable programmes, and in every kind of part, Must satisfy—and weary—the best lover of his art. So I star for the last season; but, by Jingo, I must shine; I do not mind withdrawing, but eclipse I must decline. Does that pose look like exhaustion? Have my top-notes lost their tone?

I'm as versatile as ever, I can fill the stage alone.

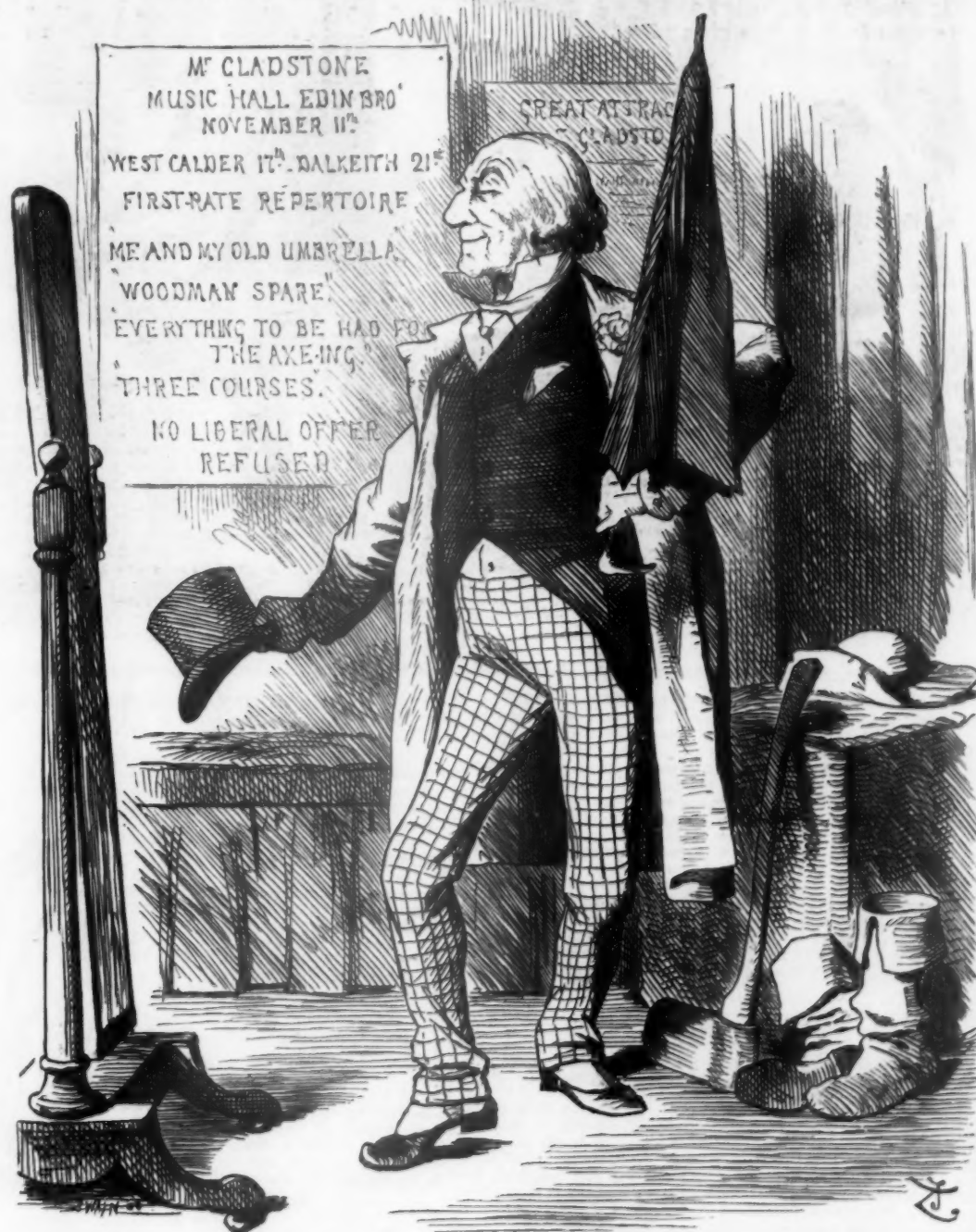
Is there any kind of character I'm not extremely good in? Is there anything that MACKENY or MACCADE or LOVE or WOODIN Was as fail at I can't rival? Rootle-tootle! Trai-lal-la! Trum-trum and twingle-twangle! Lur-li-e-ty! La-di-da! With UNSWORTH on the stump, or ARTHUR ROBERTS on the patter, I can hold my own as ever, spite of envious chaff and chatter. Northward ho! then. It is there my greatest triumphs have been scored, And this time must be a finisher, to fail I can't afford. But do I look like failing? From the fray I shall not shrink. The old Star in a new Programme! That will fetch them, I should think!

## THE "DAWN OF CREATION" AND PRACTICAL POLITICS.

OUR versatile Axe-Premier has been dabbling in Theology and Science in the *Nineteenth Century*. This is an excellent preparation for his appearance, next week, as advertised, at the Music Hall, Edinburgh, where he might revive the popular ditty, "*Says Aaron to Moses*." Judging only by the quotations from the article in the *Nineteenth Century*, Mr. GLADSTONE seems, in the finish, to be somewhat in accord with the gentleman who, on visiting the ruins of Jupiter's Temple, politely took his hat off, explaining to his friend, that "he considered it politic to keep in with the old régime, as one never knew what turn of the wheel might bring them into power again." Is it intended for readers between the lines to gather anything certain from this as to Mr. GLADSTONE's exact views with regard to "Disestablishment"?

"*MAUVAISE Plaisanterie*," as the unhappy person said at Newmarket last week, after backing *Isobar* and *St. Gatien*. We hear that the distinguished gentleman who lost five-and-sixpence over the race has determined on selling his studs and retiring from the Turf. We give the information for what it is worth—which is a trifle over the value of the studs.





## REAPPEARANCE OF THE POPULAR FAVOURITE.

[“Mr. GLADSTONE at the Music Hall, Edinburgh, Nov. 11th; West Calder, 17th; Dalkeith, 21st.”—See Advertisement in Daily Papers.]



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Geological Survey





"OLD YER 'OSS, SIR!"

# OUR LONDON LAZAR-HOUSE.

(After Dr. Cantlie.)



THE COMING LONDONER.

From a Sketch by Mr. JAMES CANTLIE, M.B., F.R.C.S., who thinks we are unable to go straight in London!

1. ELIZA, have you turned on the "Bottled Bournemouth" or the "Fine Old Crusted Madeira" air this morning?

2. The trail of the Gas Companies seems still to be painfully present in the atmosphere which comes to us through our old family gas-pipes.

3. How many people did you say were suffocated yesterday on attempting to turn on their "Margate Mixture" atmosphere, owing to a residuum of gas being left in the meter?

4. This plan of being able to take on's sea-side holiday by simply going into a room in one's London house, has certainly the advantage of economy.

5. If, as Dr. CANTLIE says, no fresh ozone has come to the Strand for one hundred and twenty years past, can a local tradesman without a

7. This plan of turning Hyde Park into a large cemetery for the victims of our "lop-sided" pavements, is really one of the greatest hygienic triumphs of the age.

8. Having made my Will (in favour of my robust cousin who lives at Dreadtown-in-the-Swamp), taken an insurance-ticket on my life, put on my "patent charcoal and felt respirator and lung-protector," and tied the kitchen-poker securely to my spinal column (to prevent its being twisted by the pavements), I think I may now run the risk of going down to Bond Street to see my tailor.

9. The noise we heard last night in the kitchen arose, I find, from the "bacteria" out of the wood-pavement having got into our house, and engaging in a conflict with the black-beetles.

10. The "oldest inhabitant" of Fetter Lane, who is actually still alive at the age of thirty-six, and only subject to intermittent attacks of catalepsy and quartan ague, is to be given a congratulatory banquet, and made a prominent feature of the next South Kensington and St. Thomas's Hospital Exhibition of Metropolitan Marvels.

## A FIRST-RATE CHANCE.

At Lambeth, a few days since, a handicraftsman was convicted, on the evidence of an Officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, of having committed that offence by stabbing a donkey with a bradawl. Whilst driving a donkey and barrow, he was seen to thrust a bradawl into the donkey's back. Mr. CHANCE sentenced the man to six weeks' imprisonment without the option of a fine. The donkey is said to have been seriously injured, and doubtless felt the bradawl stuck into him a very great burn. Sentence of imprisonment and hard labour served the handicraftsman right. But if thus it shall be done to a driver for prodding a donkey, how much more to a ruffian for the greater cruelty of a brutal assault, to the infliction of injury and pain, upon man, woman, or child? His punishment will be a certainty, when it is a matter for CHANCE to decide.

"PLATFORMS AND PLANKS."—We hear so much about the Liberal Platform and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's "plank," that when re-elected he must come in as Consul PLANCUS.

"SOLD!"



*Middleman Meat Salesman (to New-fashioned Farmer).* "HALLO! SELLING IT DIRECT TO THE BUTCHER, OR HIS CUSTOMER THE PUBLIC! WHAT'S TO BECOME OF ME!"

"BUTCHER, butcher, kill the ox, run away with the money-box!" says the old nursery jingle, surely with prophetic insight. But times are changing. The Killer of the Ox, it seems, is not in future to run away with the money-box—in other words, with the biggest slice of the profits. The Stock-farmer is putting in his claim to a somewhat larger share than markets and moneyed Middlemen have hitherto allowed him. As the *Echo* puts it, "he kills his own beasts, puts on his own butchers to cut them up, and sells direct to the public." Shocking! What is to become of our old friend the Middleman, if this new-fangled notion of "direct supply" is—as appears likely—to be widely disseminated? Direct Supply, indeed! Why, what

does that mean but that the Producer is to get a fair profit, the Consumer a cheap article, and the Middleman—Agent, Salesman, Factor, or what not—that truly "happy medium" who comes between them and "taps" the purse of both without any particular reason, is to get—nothing? Mercury, who lay in wait for the Sun-god's oxen and killed them to his own advantage, should surely be the tutelary divinity of the Middleman:—

"And this among the gods shall be your gift,  
To be considered as the lord of these  
Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal, and shop-lift,"

said the irate Apollo. He might have added, of those who build up





STRICTLY IMPARTIAL.

Policeman (to Giovanni and Giuseppe, who had fallen out, and were slanging each other in more or less pure Tuscan). "NOW THEN, YOU TWO, MAKE USE O' BETTER LANGUAGE, OR I'LL RUN YER BOTH IN!"

monopolies, and make "rings." The superfluous intermediary, who, stepping in between producer and consumer, manages to get heavy pickings out of both for doing nothing in particular, would have commended himself to the "heifer-stealing schemer" who, in his very cradle, got the better of sun-bright Apollo himself. But he seems to have had his day. Trade appears at last to be awaking to active and co-operative antagonism against him. "One day," says the *Echo*, "it is the colliery owner who builds his fleet, carries his own coal to the great towns, and retails in his own name." Then it is "the Kentish wheat-grower who is tired of lining the pockets of the corn-factor, is having his own wheat ground, and selling it from sevenpence to ninepence a gallon." And now the Stock-grower strikes his swashing blow against his long-time tyrant. *Punch* hears boding whispers, too, of other co-operative schemes for his discomfiture. Presently, taking one consideration with another, his life will hardly be so happy or profitable a one as heretofore. And those who know nothing about his insinuating artfulness, his autocratic bumptiousness, his unscrupulous greed, will perhaps "pity the poor Middleman" very much indeed. But they only!

For, when between the field of the grower and the dish of the dining consumer, there are fewer Jack-Horner-like fingers in the pie of trade profits, when fewer filched "plums" have to pass into the pockets of scheming intermediaries, then perhaps it may be found that the problem of securing a living profit to the farmer and a cheap joint to the workman is not an insoluble one, after all. And then the Salesman will find himself Sold!

"A KISS AND SOMETHING MORE!"—Last week, at Salford, an impulsive furniture-dealer had to pay thirty pounds, and be bound over in a hundred more to be of good behaviour for twelve months, for kissing a young lady in a railway carriage. The furniture-dealer ought to have acquired a little more French polish by this time. The ancient maxim for men is "Don't kiss and tell," but when such extraordinary travellers are about, the lady's rule must be "If kissed, tell immediately." However, thirty pounds wasn't bad.

CANOE-RIAL BLISS.—Being paddled by your wife in a double canoe.

SUNDAY CLOSING.

(Latest from St. Albans.)

THE recent correspondence on the subject of the Sunday Visiting of St. Albans has led to the following arrangements being made by the local Authorities, which, it is hoped, will meet all the requirements of the case.

Intending Visitors to the Abbey will not be admitted within its precincts before cock-crow on Sunday morning, unless specially provided with a card authorising their entrance from the Dean.

The same regulation will apply to those desirous of visiting the sacred building either in the middle of the services or after night-fall.

No permission, however, will be deemed requisite in the case of those who have successfully dodged away from under the eye of the Verger in charge at any other period of the day; but those who have succeeded in doing so must understand that, in the event of his leaving the edifice for the purpose of taking his luncheon or tea, they will be looked in till his return.

In the event of this happening late in the afternoon, and it appearing likely that those who are thus detained may have to make a night of it within the Abbey walls, assistance may be sought by shouting out through the West window for "the Dean," who, if he happens to be within hearing, may possibly inquire into the matter, and give it his attention; but, any attempt on the part of those detained to escape by climbing and letting themselves down by torn cushion-covers, will be strongly deprecated by the Authorities.

Visitors unwittingly locked in in the enclosure while admiring the exterior, will be at liberty to escape, if they can, by getting over the iron railings, and for this they will not require the written permission of the Dean.

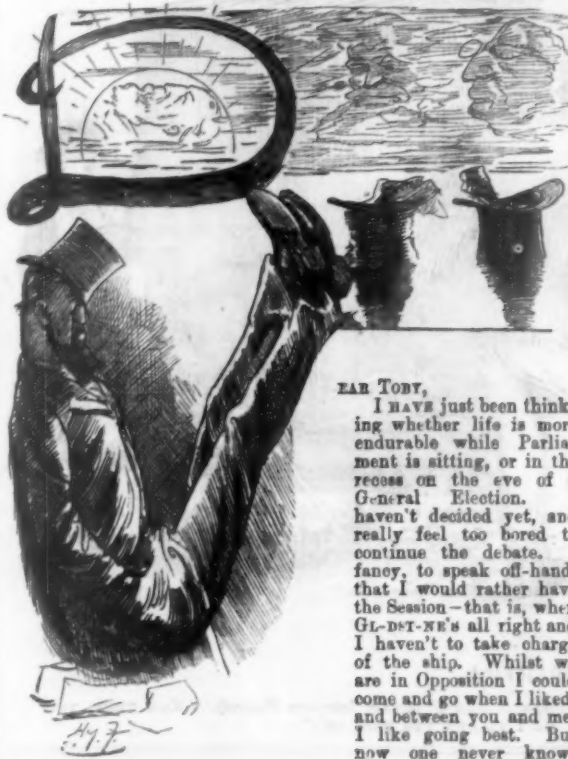
Tip to our Talkers.

AMIDST your verbal fog and mist,  
One thing remember, if you please:  
True Liberty does not consist  
In taking liberties.

## THE LETTER-BAG OF TOBY, M.P.

VII.—FROM THE HEART OF H-RT-NGT-N.

Devonshire House. Monday.



EAR TOBY,

I HAVE just been thinking whether life is more endurable while Parliament is sitting, or in the recess on the eve of a General Election. I haven't decided yet, and really feel too bored to continue the debate. I fancy, to speak off-hand, that I would rather have the Session—that is, when GL-DRT-XE's all right and I haven't to take charge of the ship. Whilst we are in Opposition I could come and go when I liked, and between you and me, I like going best. But now one never knows where he is, gallivanting

about the country, making speeches in hot and crowded rooms to excited electors. Then the next morning there's those newspapers at you; something you've done that you ought to have left undone, or something omitted that spoils the whole effect of an otherwise fairly good speech.

Did you see how they went for me the other day because, speaking on a Friday night, I did not reply to a speech made by the Markiss on the night before? It's all very well for fellows like CH-MB-RL-N to do things of the kind. But I'm not going to be hurried. Besides, before the Markiss spoke I had my speech all ready, and if they thought I was going to chuck it away and make another at an hour's notice they made a mistake.

I trust, dear Toby, you will take warning by my dreadful example, and keep out of politics. Since the day, now twenty-six years gone, when I moved a Vote of No Confidence in Lord D-BRY's Government, I have scarcely had a happy hour. There have been brief gleams of joy when we have gone into Opposition. But they have been speedily quenched by fresh responsibilities and duties. I don't know what I am doing in the galley at all. I have been impressed, chained to the oar, and there I slave. But how sore at heart it is only in moments of confidence like this that I disclose. I would get out of it, but there would be the bore of explanations, struggling with entreaties and all that sort of thing. So I drift on, stolidly doing what work is appointed for me, quitting the ship as early as possible, and staying away as long as they'll let me.

I suppose a crisis will arise some day, and there will be presented the spectacle of what I hope GL-DRT-XE will allude to as "H-RT-NGT-N rightly struggling to be free." I have gone a long way with CH-MB-RL-N, but there seems no end of his journey, and we must inevitably come to the parting of the ways. What shall I do then? G-SCH-N and I could work very well together, and F-NRT-N would be glad enough to get into any respectable company that would look like fighting CH-MB-RL-N. But F-NRT-N's out of the hunt now. He played his cards so badly after leaving us as to destroy any chance of reinstatement with the Liberal Party, either in the House or the country. G-SCH-N and I, standing shoulder to shoulder on a back seat, would play havoc with the strongest Radical Government that could be formed. But what's the good? That means more

work, even harder and more engrossing work. Better stop where I am than undertake a business of that kind.

I was rather struck with that notion of the Markiss's to cut the whole business and go out and earn his own living. If they really went, and the Markiss was to say "Come over and help us," I would be much more inclined to accept the invitation than the one from R-ND-LPH. I have rather a hankering for the ranch business. I think it would suit me, and besides, we could not have Grand CA-ss with us. There would plainly be no place for a beadle on a ranch. I own the prospect of spending a succession of long evenings with Grand CA-ss rather warns me off.

In truth, Toby, all things are vanity. But most of all this going to and fro and making of long speeches. It's the very d-v-l. I sometimes sit under my tilted hat in the House of Commons, and meditate with wonder upon GL-DRT-XE. How can he take such keen interest in all kinds of divers matters as they present themselves to him? He worries me with his restless activity, and tires me with his tireless energy. I want to get away from it all and do as I like, come and go when I like, say what I like, and be silent when I please. I fancy (though it is a worry to fancy) that I will make a passably good Duke. Very little is expected from a duke, and once emancipated very little they'll get from me.

This is a serious letter, but life is a serious thing, especially to

Yours faithfully,

H-RT-NGT-N.

To TOBY, M.P., The Kennel, Barks.

P.S.—Did you ever hear of an American politician they call "Sunset Cox?" He got this name because he once said, in reference to his position in the political world, "I am becoming rather a memory than a hope." I suppose by-and-by those confoundedly frank newspapers will be writing of me as Sunset H-RT-NGT-N!

## "WHY AM I A LIBERAL?"

1. "Why am I a Liberal?" Because I am (Dr. JOHNSON) "not mean; nor low in birth," or, if so, still my conduct and manners are "becoming a gentleman." Because I am "munificent, generous, bountiful"—always entirely at my own expense.

2. "Why am I a Liberal?" Because I am (later dictionary definition) "one who advocates greater freedom, especially in politics." I am opposed to intimidation, dictation, and every kind of restriction upon personal liberty, whether autocratic or democratic.

3. "Why am I a Liberal?" Because I intend, politically and socially, to do as I would be done by. Because I am not a pseudo-Liberal. I do not envy those who are better off, or better educated than myself. I do not hate them. I advocate reform and retrenchment from a sincere sense of justice, and not from a covert desire to reduce the circumstances, and diminish the incomes of people in a social position superior to my own. Because, although anxious for peace and economy, I uphold the maintenance of our national defences on an amply Liberal scale. Because I really wish to ameliorate the condition of the poorer classes, from a feeling of true benevolence, and don't offer to support their demands, reasonable or unreasonable, merely in order to catch their votes, and induce them to gratify my propensities of self-esteem, and love of approbation, by returning me to Parliament, and enabling me to obtain place and power.

4. "Why am I a Liberal?" Because my Mother-in-law's a Conservative. So's my Wife.

5. "Why am I a Liberal?" Because I like the dinners at the Reform Club; and if you ask me why I'm a Re-former, I answer because I never yet saw anything good but what it could be better.

6. "Why am I a Liberal?" Because I choose. So shut up, and get out!

## GOING FOR GOSCHEN.

SIR CHARLES DILER objects to Mr. GOSCHEN that "his critical faculty is too strongly developed." Perhaps so. But then Sir CHARLES, there are other Members of the Liberal Party whose critical faculty does not seem to be developed at all. For indiscriminate condemnation of one's opponents is not criticism, any more than indiscriminate self-eulogy is. So Mr. GOSCHEN's single superfluous may be an advantageous set-off against their multitudinous deficiency. You can hardly say of him that "he is nothing if not critical." He is that and a good deal more. Yet you and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN seem much disposed to try and Boycott him. Very foolish, very unfair, and, after all the loud talk of Liberal unity, comprehensiveness, and tolerance, very inconsistent. Criticism has been called the Gay Science. Leaden dulness naturally loves it not. But what a dolorous deadlock of mindless monotony, of fatuous uniformity, of goose-flock gregariousness, will Liberalism dribble down to, if, leaving in all the gu-hers and formula-grinders, you rub out of its ranks every critical eye and every coolly-discriminating judgment! Nonsense, Sir CHARLES!

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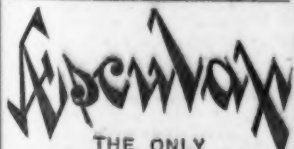
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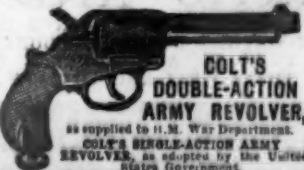
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